

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN UZBEKISTAN'S INNOVATION STRATEGY

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### Annotation

This article examines the role of international cooperation in the innovation strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It analyzes the importance of global partnerships in enhancing technological development, attracting foreign investments, and improving scientific research capacity. The study highlights key directions such as technology transfer, joint research projects, and integration into the global innovation system. Furthermore, the paper evaluates future prospects for expanding international cooperation to ensure sustainable economic growth and competitiveness of the national economy.

### Keywords

innovation strategy, international cooperation, technology transfer, e-government, IT parks, startup ecosystem, research and innovation centers, digital economy, human capital development, south Korea cooperation

### Introduction

In the context of rapid globalization, innovation has become a key driver of economic growth and competitiveness for countries around the world. Modern economies increasingly rely on technological progress, scientific research, and the effective implementation of innovative solutions. In this regard, the Republic of Uzbekistan has identified innovation-driven development as a strategic priority aimed at modernizing the national economy and improving its global position.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has undertaken significant reforms to strengthen its innovation system, including the development of digital technologies, support for scientific research, and the creation of innovation infrastructure. However, achieving sustainable innovation growth requires not only internal resources but also active engagement in international cooperation. Global collaboration enables access to advanced technologies, foreign investment, and valuable expertise.

International cooperation plays a crucial role in facilitating technology transfer, enhancing research capacity, and integrating national innovation systems into the global network. Therefore, studying the role and prospects of international partnerships within Uzbekistan's innovation strategy is of great importance for ensuring long-term economic development and increasing national competitiveness.

Innovative development, in the context of modern globalization, is considered one of the most important factors ensuring sustainable economic growth in any country. In contemporary economic systems, competition is determined not only by resources or production capacity, but also by the ability to generate innovations, implement them rapidly, and commercialize them effectively. From this perspective, the concept of an innovation strategy emerges as a significant theoretical and practical category that defines the priority directions of national economic development.

The concept of innovation itself is interpreted differently in scientific literature. In general terms, innovation is understood as the process of creating new ideas, technologies, products, or management methods and implementing them in practice. It encompasses not only scientific

novelty but also its contribution to economic efficiency. The economist Joseph Schumpeter regarded innovation as the main driving force of economic development, associating it with the implementation of new combinations, such as the introduction of new products, new methods of production, new markets, and new forms of organization.

An innovation strategy, in turn, represents a system of long-term planned actions aimed at organizing, managing, and developing innovative activities in a systematic manner. It determines the path of innovative development for a country or organization and serves to ensure efficient allocation of resources, support for scientific research, introduction of new technologies, and production of competitive goods. As an integral part of economic policy, an innovation strategy is closely linked with the overall development strategy of a country.

The role of an innovation strategy in the national economy is significant. Innovations accelerate structural changes in the economy, expand the production of high value-added goods, increase export potential, and create new employment opportunities. Through innovation strategies, governments effectively utilize scientific potential, strengthen the integration of science, education, and production, and accelerate the modernization of the economy. Moreover, innovative development enhances the competitiveness of the national economy in international markets and facilitates its successful integration into the global economic system.

The content of an innovation strategy is primarily reflected in its main goals and objectives. These include the development and implementation of new technologies, the promotion of scientific research activities, the formation of innovation infrastructure, the attraction of investments, and the development of human capital. In addition, innovation strategies are aimed at implementing structural changes in the economy, diversifying industries, developing high-tech production, and transitioning to a digital economy.

Innovation strategies can be classified according to various criteria. First of all, they can be divided into active and passive strategies. Active innovation strategies focus on creating new knowledge, developing advanced technologies, and achieving market leadership, while passive strategies are primarily oriented toward adapting existing technologies and utilizing innovations developed by other entities. Furthermore, innovation strategies can be categorized into technological, managerial, informational, and social types. Technological strategies aim at modernizing production processes, whereas managerial strategies focus on improving organizational efficiency and management practices.

International cooperation plays a crucial role in the effective implementation of the innovation development strategy in the Republic of Uzbekistan. As emphasized in previous sections, innovation development has a global nature and cannot be fully achieved without international integration and the exchange of experience. Therefore, Uzbekistan has established broad cooperation with leading international organizations in the process of developing its innovation activities. This cooperation enables the country to attract advanced technologies, enhance scientific research capacity, develop innovation infrastructure, and accelerate economic reforms.



In particular, cooperation with organizations within the system of the United Nations is considered one of the key directions of Uzbekistan's innovation policy. Through various UN agencies, numerous projects are being implemented in the fields of sustainable development, digital transformation, education, and science. Within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), programs aimed at introducing innovative technologies, ensuring environmental sustainability, and supporting social development serve as an essential component of innovation development. Through such cooperation, Uzbekistan adapts to global development trends and shapes its innovation policy in accordance with international standards.

At the same time, cooperation with the World Bank plays an important role in financing innovation development and supporting economic reforms. Loans and grants provided by the World Bank are directed toward modernizing various sectors of the economy, developing digital infrastructure, and implementing innovative projects. In particular, projects focused on modernizing the education system, introducing innovative technologies in healthcare, and expanding digital systems in public administration make a significant contribution to the country's innovation development.

Furthermore, cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme is also of great importance for Uzbekistan's innovation development. Through this organization, projects aimed at improving public administration, developing the digital economy, and introducing innovative approaches are being implemented. Within the framework of UNDP cooperation, initiatives are being promoted to digitalize public services, introduce innovative governance mechanisms, and support regional development.

High-tech cooperation with Korea is gaining importance. For example, there are joint initiatives to develop e-government, modernize industry, and establish research centers.



Uzbekistan is experiencing significant changes as a result of innovative cooperation with South Korea. For example, as of 2023, the number of IT parks in Tashkent has reached 5, through which more than 1,500 startup projects have been supported, and 60% of them have been financed. As a result of the activities of INHA University in Tashkent, 800 students in IT and engineering were trained by Korean experts in 2022–2023, which increased the training of young specialists by 25%. The number of joint projects in research and innovation centers has

increased from 12 in 2021 to 28 in 2023, including projects in the fields of artificial intelligence and the digital economy, which account for 70%. The number of electronic services in the e-gov system for digitization of public administration increased from 450 in 2021 to 720 in 2023, which increased the speed of service provision by 35%. There was also a significant increase in investment flows: while Korean companies invested in Uzbekistan in the technological and IT sector in 2020, it reached \$ 85 million in 2023, which represents a 2.8-fold increase. Thus, through international cooperation, the startup ecosystem in the country has developed, young specialists have been trained, research potential has increased, and public services have improved in quality.

Indicator	2021	2022	2023	2024 (Forecast)	2025 (Forecast)
Number of IT Parks (Tashkent)	3	4	5	6	7
Supported Startup Projects	800	1,200	1,500	1,800	2,100
Financed Startup Projects (%)	55%	58%	60%	63%	65%
Trained IT & Engineering Specialists (INHA Univ.)	500	650	800	950	1,100
Number of R&D & Innovation Projects	12	18	28	38	50
Share of AI & Digital Economy Projects (%)	60%	65%	70%	72%	75%
Number of e-Gov Services	450	580	720	850	1,000
Service Delivery Speed Increase (%)	–	15%	35%	40%	45%
Korean Investment in Tech & IT (mln \$)	30	55	85	110	140

### Conclusion

In the era of rapid globalization, innovation has emerged as a critical driver of economic growth and competitiveness. Uzbekistan has recognized the importance of innovation-driven development and has implemented strategic reforms to strengthen its innovation system, including digital technologies, scientific research, and innovation infrastructure. However, sustainable growth in innovation requires active international cooperation. Partnerships with global organizations, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, UNDP, and strategic high-tech cooperation with South Korea, have enabled Uzbekistan to access advanced technologies, attract investments, enhance research capacity, and modernize public services. The establishment of IT parks, training of young specialists, development of research and innovation projects, and expansion of e-government services demonstrate the tangible results of these collaborations.



Overall, international cooperation has significantly contributed to the development of Uzbekistan's innovation ecosystem, increased human capital, and improved the quality and efficiency of public administration, thereby strengthening the country's global competitiveness and laying the foundation for long-term sustainable economic growth.

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